

Message Text

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LIMDIS/NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: DISCUSSION OF
DATA WITH EAST

1. AT MARCH 25 INFORMAL SESSION KHLESTOV ASKED WEST TO WORK WITH EAST TO DEVELOP COMMON DEFINITION OF GROUND FORCES. WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY TO THIS SUGGESTION SINCE IT CONSTITUTES A WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS GROUND FORCE DATA AND SINCE IT MAY PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO GET BETTER INSIGHT INTO SOVIET CATEGORIZATION OF EASTERN FORCES. IT WILL ALSO GIVE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OF OBTAINING AGREED STARTING POINT FOR REDUCTIONS AND FOR REDUCING APPARENT DISCREPANCIES IN FIGURES HELD BY BOTH SIDES. MOREOVER, AN UNDERSTANDING OF SOVIET VIEWS ON DATA IS A NECESSARY PRECONDITION TO KNOWING WHAT REDUCTIONS AN AGREEMENT BY THE EAST TO THE COMMON CEILING WOULD IMPLY.

2. ACCORDINGLY, AS FIRST STEP TOWARDS OPENING DISCUSSION OF DATA WITH EAST WE INTEND IN THE WEEK OF MARCH 31 IN BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH THE SOVIETS

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TO INDICATE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE UP KHLESTOV'S

REQUEST. WE WOULD INTEND AT THE SAME TIME TO SUGGEST THAT, ON A BILATERAL BASIS, WE BEGIN COMPARISON OF ACTUAL FIGURES OF NATO AND PACT GROUND FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA.

3. IF SOVIETS AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO GET INTO FIGURES, WE PLAN TO OFFER TO EXCHANGE WITH THEM DATA ON NATO AND WARSAW PACT GROUND FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA, BREAKING THEM DOWN INTO NATIONAL COMPONENTS, IF THE SOVIETS AGREE TO TABLE THEIR DATA ON THOSE SUBJECTS IN THE SAME SESSION. AS A SECOND POSITION, WE WOULD AGREE TO TABLE OUR DATA ON THE NATIONAL COMPOSITION OF THE NATO 777,000 GROUND FORCE FIGURE IN RETURN FOR SOVIET DATA ON THE SAME FORCES ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT A SECOND SESSION WOULD DEAL WITH WARSAW PACT FORCES ON THE SAME BASIS. IN SUCH SESSIONS, WE WOULD SIMPLY IDENTIFY ANY DISCREPANCIES AND NOT COMMENT ON THEM. EVEN IF THE EXCHANGE SHOULD NOT DEVELOP FURTHER AT THIS TIME, WE WOULD AT LEAST KNOW SOMETHING WE DO NOT NOW KNOW ABOUT THE SOVIET POSITION.

4. TO MEET KHLESTOV'S REQUEST TO WORK TOWARD COMMON DEFINITION OF GROUND FORCES, WE WOULD AGREE TO NOTE IN SEPARATE COLUMN THOSE FORCES WHERE QUESTIONS ARE RAISED AS REGARDS THEIR INCLUSION IN OR EXCLUSION FROM ACCEPTED DEFINITION OF GROUND FORCES.

5. WE WOULD USE THE ORIGINAL 321,000 FIGURE FOR THE GERMAN FORCES. IF, AS IS PROBABLE, IT IS CHALLENGED, THIS WOULD GIVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAY WE WOULD CHECK AND THUS A POSSIBILITY TO DEMONSTRATE GOOD FAITH AT A LATER POINT BY MOVING TO THE HIGHER FIGURE OF 341,000

6. IF ONE OR TWO ROUNDS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS PROVE USEFUL, WE WILL THEN SEEK TO OBTAIN SOVIET AGREEMENT TO INTRODUCE THE FIGURES INTO THE MULTILATERAL INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS.

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7. IF SOVIETS DECLINE TO GET INTO DISCUSSION OF ACTUAL FIGURES, BUT WISH TO PERSEVERE IN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE GROUND FORCES, WE WILL AGREE TO PURSUE THIS ISSUE IN INFORMAL SESSIONS. HUMES

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